THE CHAPBOOK

A MISCELLANY

(No. 39)

1924

THE POETRY BOOKSHOP
35 DEVONSHIRE STREET
THEOBALDS ROAD
LONDON, W.C.1

THE CHAPBOOK

(A MISCELLANY)

EDITED BY HAROLD MONRO

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Apology

ABOUT two centuries after the invention of printing, periodicals began. The first on record in England was the *Mercurius Librarius* (1680). In 1910 the Magazines and Reviews published in the United Kingdom amounted to 2,795. Their number increases every year, although many new ones do not survive their first few issues. The supply indeed is in excess of the demand. It is often complained that they distract attention from books and encourage scrappy reading. As we ourselves are inclined to sympathise with this complaint, it seems appropriate to offer an apology for reviving a periodical which fell compulsorily into abeyance in June, 1923.

The excuse we offer is based upon the fact that, though the number of such publications may be excessive, the standard is very low. The object of THE CHAPBOOK is to encourage new talent and to introduce to the public writers and artists of genuine originality, whether unacknowledged or acknowledged. We do not know of twenty English or American periodicals that even profess these aims. Therefore we have a definite excuse for continuing our efforts. Interest in our fortunes appears to have increased during the period in which publication has been in abeyance. In its own particular sphere, we confidently believe that THE CHAPBOOK has good reason and sufficient warrant to revive its activities.

Much as we should like, even for an hour, to be able to divert attention from the daily press, yet it is our chief scruple that we do not want to afford an additional excuse for disconnected and scrappy reading, or to distract attention from books. In the life of to-day leisure is rare and treasurable for conversation, for books, for thought and much else ; even for sleep. It is necessary that we all use discretion in our choice of periodicals, that they may not encumber our tables, and our minds.

A periodical is (let us say) a forum of many tastes. It is best compiled with the conscious object of promoting discussion. It may also be a good trial ground or school of print for juniors. One of its essential objects (if it be serious) will be to place before the individual reader a momentary conspectus of his time. Also if it is a representative compilation it retains a curious and haunting interest for a long period after its first appearance. The Yellow Book is a striking recent example, and there are many others, belonging to various periods, that one can still re-open with keen interest.

As to THE CHAPBOOK, it dares not hope for more than that its patrons may let it lie decoratively on their tables for a few months, and that it may provide them with entertainment sufficient for the moment. In the last monthly issue (No. 38, June, 1923) the hope was expressed that it would be possible to publish at any rate one supplementary number. Here it is. If it warrants its existence a similar volume will be produced on the 15th of October in each year.

As for the contents, a policy has been adopted of brevity and of variety, which circumstance of itself explains the exclusion of certain writers. There have, however, been a few disappointments, and the Editor, as a matter of self-justification, cannot refrain from apologizing for the absence of contributions from at least some half-a-dozen writers and two or three artists whose inclusion had appeared to him essential to the scheme of the number.

(*Camilla Doyle*)

Cuckoos, Larks & Sparrows

THE cuckoo is a heartless bird,
Enraging kindly pairs;
But he sounds gayer, being rid
Of home and all his cares.

He has a merry double note,
Copied quite verbatim
From the imps that laughed when Adam fell;
And decent sparrows hate him.

Though the lark can sing with mouths to fill
Not everyone can be
A genius and a housekeeper
Together, as can he.

Housework would make the cuckoo
Too tired to cuckoo more;
His head would ring all day with dreams
That came the night before,

Hammering against his brows
For notes to let them through—
He'd put them off all day and then
At night postpone them too.

The sparrows live in dusty crowds
With endless quarrelling
For building-straws and crumbs of bread—
No wonder they don't sing.

The lark is strong enough for both
Singing and home-affairs;
But the cuckoo's gayest, being rid
Of home and all his cares.

(*Anna Wickham*)

Eugenics

MY great-grandfather was a pious man,
He lived carefully and well, as a Methodist can—
He was thrifty and laborious, he made no waste—
He closed his house at nine at night, was faithful and chaste ;
He was just to all men in their degree,
He went to class-meetings and had the Minister to tea,
From birth to death he rose two grades in rank ;
Born a labourer, he died a farmer with savings in the bank ;
But all the calculations of his life-time were undone
By my grandfather, who was his only son.

My grandfather was naturally addicted to Sin ;
At the age of eight he bought a violin,
Alone he learned to play that thing of evil,
Though well he knew that music was the language of the Devil!
Sweet sounds and sin were wedded joy
To the perverted sense of that farm-boy.
He practised waltzes in the barn, using a mute,
When he had fiddled long in secret, bought a flute.

One day his father found his fiddle, and in ire
Broke the vile thing, and threw it on the fire.
Savage and unpersuaded, the mad fellow
Begged, stole and starved, until he bought a 'cello !

The rogue, my grandfather, would never stop
On any farm, or patient in a shop ;
He wished the spade and yardstick both to Hades
And took the road with a tragedian, and two light-ladies.

The Minister never knew all his poor life
Whether one or both these women was my grandfather's wife.
I, a conservative, am descended from their communion,
And I am married to the Squire, though my grandfather died in the Union !

(*R. A. K. Mason*) The Latter-Day Geography Lesson

"THIS," quoth the Eskimo master,
"Was London in English times—
Step out a little bit faster,
You two young men at the last, there—
The Bridge would be on our right hand,
And the Tower near where those crows stand.
We struck it, you'll recall, in Gray's rhymes.
This," quoth the Eskimo master,
"Was London in English times."

"This," quoth the Eskimo master,
"Was London in English days.
Beyond that hill they called Clapham—
Boys that swear, Master Redtooth, I slap 'em—
I dis-tinct-ly heard you say 'Blast yer'—
Don't argue.
Here, boys, ere disaster
Overtook her, in splendour there lay
A city held empires in sway,
And filled all the earth with her praise.
This," quoth the Eskimo master,
"Was London in English days."

"She held," quoth the Eskimo master,
"Ten million when her prime was full.
From here once Britannia cast her
Gaze o'er an Empire vaster
Even than ours. Look, there Woking
Stood, I make out; and the Abbey
Lies here 'neath our feet—— *You great babby,*
Swift-and-short, do please, kindly, stop poking
Your thumbs through the eyes of that skull."

(*Humbert Wolfe*)

A Dream of Socrates

ONE day when Socrates was on his way to the Stoa to meet a sophist of his acquaintance he fell in with the boy Alcibiades coming from the bath with his quail under his arm. Alcibiades uttered a cry of joy at seeing the master, but his impetuous greeting died on his lips when he remarked his extreme pallor.

" By Zeus, Socrates," said Alcibiades, " you are pale to-day. Did you drink too deep last night with old Cephalus ? Or have you slipped out of the Cave and been terrified by the sight of the Archetypes ? "

" Why, Alcibiades," replied Socrates, " I am in truth somewhat disturbed, but the cause is neither drink nor the effulgence of what is. The truth is," he went on shamefacedly, " that I have had an ugly dream, and, though well knowing the thin and ghostly quality of the shapes that pass by night, I confess that I cannot shake myself free of it."

" Why, then," cried Alcibiades, drawing him on to one of the marble benches in the shade of a plane tree, " ease your soul by communicating your vision."

" If it will not tire you, willingly," said Socrates, " and here " (for at that moment they came across the square) " are Glaucon and Adeimantus, who may wish to lend their ears to a fairy-tale told by the dry-as-dust old Socrates."

" A fairy-tale ! " cried they. " That is something new, and therefore desirable. Tell on, Socrates ; we will listen, though you talked the Charioteer past the Pillars of Hercules."

" Remember then," said Socrates, " you have brought the thing on yourselves." And with that preliminary warning he told this dream under a blue sky, while the shadows gathered slowly on Athene's temple.

" Last night," said Socrates, " I had had the opportunity of listening to an exposition of the meaning of justice by Thrasymachus. I had ventured, as is my wont, to ask him a question here and there in order to clear up doubtful points. It had ended by Thrasymachus asserting that justice and injustice

were identical, because, unless a man were both unjust and just, he could not distinguish between the two. ' Then,' I had said, ' the greatest criminal would be the best judge, Thrasymachus.' ' Certainly,' he said, ' and that is the common experience of mankind.' With that he flounced out of the room, leaving me much puzzled. I suppose that I was more tired than I had imagined, for almost immediately after I fell into a deep slumber, in which I was visited by an alarming dream, which came, if ever dream came that way, through the gate of horn.

" For it seemed to me that I stepped out of the calm of the house of Cephalus through the pillars, expecting to find the cool, empty street, the still Acropolis, and Selene's yellow lantern quietly burning in the sky. Instead an uproar, such as Homer fables burst from the blinded Polyphemus, destroyed for a moment my hearing. It was a noise not only enormous, but one that dragged at the heart like a grappling anchor, and struck, and loosed hold, and struck again. I felt as though my soul had been inconceivably outraged by a monster.

" Nor was the noise the worst thing that I had to endure. For in front of me poured darkly an unthinkable rush of people and objects—shapes—as many and as furious as the raging dead—men and women that bore no true likeness to these about us, and great driving monsters, like the Trojan horse—swifter than birds and moving, it seemed, of their own volition."

" These," said Glaucon, " were probably the Furies who, as poets tell us, drive thus tumultuously on the ugly motion of their foul desires."

" Or Lacedemonian Charioteers," said Alcibiades, " for by the noise and lack of the charioteer's skill these seem to be of that kind."

" Furies it may be," said Socrates, " but Lacedemonians never. Even the Spartans had been gods in that foul concourse. And if the noise, the people, and the shapes were horrible the place in which these horrors moved was worse even. For, instead of leisurely tree-lined ways leading past marble to the sea, were hard roads between endless, shapeless cliffs of stone

shutting out the stars, and lit by balls of fire like the fabled bolts of Zeus.

" ' These,' I said to myself, ' are the cruel deceits of Pluto, and I, Socrates the Athenian, am dead.' As I said this I became aware that one of the creatures in this nightmare had been standing regarding me. At my words he came up to me, and laid a hand, unexpectedly gentle, on my shoulder.

" ' Are you indeed,' said he, ' Socrates the Athenian ? '

" ' I was Socrates, friend,' I answered, ' but am now a ghost among the dead.'

" ' Welcome, master ! ' said he. ' These are not the dead that you haunt, but the unborn. Two thousand years must hammer across time before these will live who pass before you now.'

" ' Now, by Zeus,' said I, ' dead though I am, I still have reason. And since all things visible are only faint copies of those silent shapes laid up in Heaven, then, in two thousand years, doubt, lies, confusion and evil will have been swallowed in the good and the true. For that which seems frets thin even today, and reality, like a man tearing a bride's veil, tears the flimsy mist. In two thousand years,' said I, ' Olympus and her gods will be a forgotten tale and Athens herself—the proud city—not even a stain on the white shape of truth.'

" ' Alas ! ' said the stranger, ' you are tired. Come with me and I will give you rest.' He led me then through this roaring Hell to a great house not ill fashioned, and still. This, he told me, was one of their temples and he (as I had guessed) a priest in it.

" For a time I sat quietly, gathering my wits, and since the place had a strange nobility, and deep lovely sighings as of many flute-players sounded in the dusk, I became in a sense my own man again.

" I looked on the stranger, and found him suddenly changed, not like the others, but clothed as we are clothed, and having in his eyes a beautiful wisdom like none I have ever known. Moreover, he spoke to me in the Hellenic tongue, though with a sweet barbaric accent.

" ' Stranger,' said I to him, ' you are, as I suppose, the high priest of these people. How comes it that they are so abandoned to ugliness ? Have they no God ? For we, though we did not know Him, yet found beauty in His unknown shadow.'

" ' The unknown God,' he said, with a strange swift smile, like a visible light. ' Yes, Socrates, you have your unknown God. But I,' he said, ' am no high priest ; rather the least of these who serve in my Father's House. And it is true that they have no God, for they have lost Him—but He,' he added with unbelievable tenderness, ' has not lost them.'

" ' And the other things,' I asked, ' the noise, the people and the roaring shapes—do these in truth exist ? '

" ' Alas ! ' said he, ' in part these do exist.'

" ' And is it truth,' said I, ' that I speak to you across two thousand years ? '

" ' Yes, Socrates,' said he most gently.

" ' And that all I dreamed of Justice and Beauty and Truth in Athens, my dear city, has after two thousand years come to violence, corruption and pain ? '

" ' That, too, is in part true,' said he more gently than ever.

" ' But if that be true,' cried I in great agony of spirit, ' all I thought and dreamed was false, and I should long ago have died with my false dream. And now,' I said, appealing to him, ' I know that you mock me. For if you spoke truth I, Socrates, the false teacher, the betrayer of the youth of the fairest city of the world, would be immortal.'

" ' But, Socrates,' he said, ' you are immortal.'

" ' I will not be immortal,' I cried, ' at such a price.'

" ' We do not choose our immortality,' said he."

" But what did the stranger mean ? " asked Glaucon.

" I do not know," said Socrates, " but I woke weeping."

" You are weeping now," said Alcibiades.

(*Sacheverell Sitwell*)

Two Odes in Praise of Popular Music

I.

At the Theatre, Once.

IN a month this will be finished
and the corridors be empty of these ghosts of music.
The swinging-doors are open—from those jaws of time
comes the music I'll remember when I'm old and dead,
for its measures, while they're living, are the limbs of life.
We lived once to that metre ;
I can hear its beating heart again and sighing breath ;
it is live once more and standing in the open door of age,
passing to the corridors,
it will die like this August when the theatre closes.
Each morning has that night gone deeper into shadow,
it is far away, too far to call, too far to touch ;
I only have memory to blow to life again,
a mocking fire that burns me with its sudden flame.
I can sing myself the music,
but that galloping horse is riderless,
it runs without a master, it is nothing to me :
no more than sighing wind if you listened for a voice to speak.
Gone, all gone, and we can never sit to listen,
we can never hear those tunes again except from patchéd memory
for we left the theatre in the hot, hollow night,
past a myriad lights whirled, by our own inner fire enclosed
that burned, all else concealing.
If I think again of the music, I can hear its measures
but I sing, stone statue in chill water,
never warmed by sun,
and air is never glass again, wind is still alone,
this music dies quickly as the dancing shades,
never to be born again till every breath is fire.

II.

Last Year's Music.

Last year's music quickly dies,
it soaks like rain into the mould of other years
sinking ever deeper till the dead rise from their graves ;
hark to how I roused them !
At the fair, the exhibition, the great test of empire,
where the crowd move like ants and do not see their shame,
steam-organs ground and rattled and the air groaned with asthma.
We stood deep in the music, under hanging lights,
friendless and alone among those creaking shades ;
when this world of lodging-houses, quick departures, and limp stucco fronts,
walked suddenly into knowledge :
we'd been lost, we turned a corner, and we knew our road ;
this known music, long forgotten,
opened our memories like those yawning bedroom-windows :
they were open and they would not shut.
It was born again in a moment,
fresh and young, that long-dead year,
and I stood undecided—nearly falling into this shadow—
not daring now to move.
I was living in last summer, and if I stirred, the glass was broken ;
while it lasted I'd become my ghost and haunted the hot past,
hot vault of the theatre :
but those laughing boughs, that ripe, green shade,
died with the slowing organ that would play some other air :
it is safe, and I can move again down these present mirrors.

From a Woodcut *John Nash*

(*Padraic Colum*) The Burial of Saint Brendan

ON the third day from this (Saint Brendan said)
I will be with my fathers, going hence,
For God will then a mighty trumpet blow:
And from the prison of this body then
I shall go forth; make ready, you, to go
With what remains to Cluan Hy-many,
For there my resurrection I'd have be.

But you will know how hard they'll strive to gain
My resurrection for this place, and keep
My body for the mould where I was born:
The wagon that our goods are carried in—
Have it yoked up between the night and morn,
And, when the breath is from my body gone,
Bear it without; the waggon lay it on;

And cover it with gear that's taken hence:
"The goods of Brendan is what's here," you'll say
To those who'll halt you; they will pass you then:
But you'll meet one who will not; a soldier he,
Armed and ugly, a putter-down of men,
Curryn his name, blind of the left eye:
He'll halt the waggon, and on you he'll cry:

"What bear you hence?" and he will question you,
Beating you down; he'll to the waggon go,
And, 'spite your pleading, pull the gear about:
He'll come upon my body where it's laid;
Then this man Curryn will raise up a shout:
"What means this move? With us his burial,
For we would give him reverence over all!"

And then to that that's on the waggon laid,
"O saint of God, be with us still," he'll cry,
"Your resurrection we would have with ours":

He'll push it back until the waggon wheel,
Making a trench, the wayside gravel scours :
You'll look ; and in the gravelly rut, behold !
All glistening there, a thumb-sized piece of gold !

Offer to him the gold was sent by God
To be my body's ransom, but that man
Will take it not, nor let the waggon by :
" We would be sanctified in this body's rise,
And have a portion in its bliss," he'll cry ;
" Not all your hands could hold would make a bribe,
No, nor the Chieftain's power in my tribe."

Then you will say, " Unless eternal life
You would have forfeit, let this body pass :
Else the cold flag of Hell will be your bed."
And say, that he may know how sure it is,
The doom that you have cast upon his head,
" You, Curryn, blind of an eye, have even now
Planned in your heart a faithless thing to do."

" Usurp the Chieftain's power in your tribe
By slaying all between you and that place,
Uncles and foster-brothers, man and youth " :
He'll know then that Hell's flag-stone is no doom
Uttered by lips unknowing, but is sooth :
He'll beat his breast, and let it go, that load,
And you will pass, mounting the ridge of road.

And, looking back, you'll see beside that man
Tinkers and tailors, soldiers, farmers, smiths,
The people of the place, all stirred up then.
He'll hold them back ; you'll go upon your way,
Leaving behind you all those stark men
For whom my virtue was a legacy
That they would profit in, each a degree.

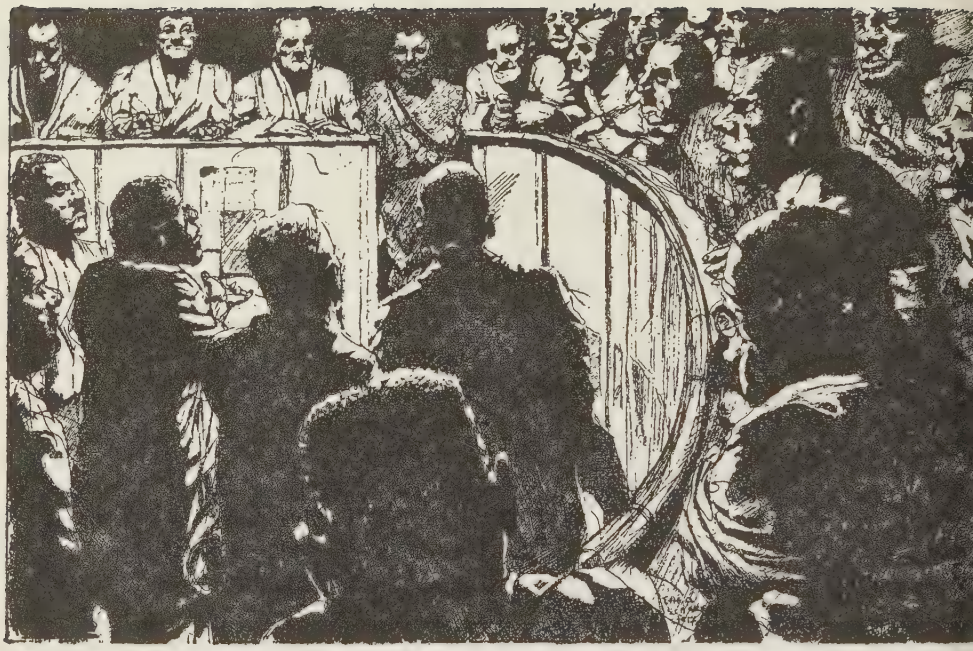
As though it were indeed some chalice, staff,
Crozier, or casket that they might come to,
And show to those who chanced upon the way.
And have, not knowing how the work was done,
In scrolls and figures, and in bright inlay ;
Whence came the gold and silver that they prize,
The blue enamels, and the turquoises !

I, Brendan, had a name came from the sea :
I was the first who sailed the outer main,
And past all forelands and all fastnesses !
I passed the voiceless anchorites, their isles,
Saw the ice-palaces upon the seas,
Mentioned Christ's name to men cut off from men,
Heard the whales snort, and saw the Kraken !

And on a wide-branched, green, and glistening tree
Beheld the birds that angels had been erst—
Between the earth and heaven 'twas theirs to wing !
Fallen from high they were, but they had still
Music of Heaven's court : I heard them sing :
Even now that Island of the unbeached coast,
I see, and see the white resplendent host !

For this they'd have my body in this place,
Their hillside, and my resurrection be
Out of the mould that they with me would share.
But I have chosen Cluan for my ground ;
A happy place ! Some grace came to me there :
And you, as you go towards it, to men say
Should any ask you on that long highway :

" Brendan is here who had great saints for friends :
Ita, who reared him on a mother's knee ;
Enda, who from his fastness blessed his sail ;
Then Brighid, she who had the flaming heart,
And Colum-cille, prime of all the Gael ;
Gildas of Britain, wisest child of light."
And saying this, drive through the falling night.



Revolutionary Tribunal, 1792
(*from a Pen Drawing by Theo Scharf*)
(*Size of Original :* 19″ × 12″)

(Eleanor Farjeon)

The Tims

EXACTLY a hundred years ago, or more, or less, there was a happy village in the very middle of England, if it wasn't a bit to the north or the south. And the reason it was so happy was that the Tims lived in it.

There were five Tims all told—Old Tim, Big Tim, Little Tim, Young Tim and Baby Tim, and they were all born wise. So whenever something was the matter in the village, or anything went wrong, or people for some cause were vexed or sorry for themselves, it became their habit to say, " Let's go to the Tims about it ; they'll know, they were born wise."

For instance, when Farmer John found that the gypsies had slept without leave in his barn one night, his first thought was not, as you might suppose, " I'll fetch the constable and have the law of them ! " but, " I'll see Old Tim about it, so I will ! "

Then off he went to Old Tim, who was eighty years old ; and he found him sitting by the fire, smoking his clay pipe.

" Morning, Old Tim," said Farmer John.

" Morning, Farmer John," said Old Tim, taking his clay from his mouth.

" I've had the gypsies in my barn again, Old Tim," said Farmer John.

" Ah, have you now ? " said Old Tim.

" Ay, that I have," said Farmer John.

" Ah, to be sure," said Old Tim.

" You was born wise, Old Tim," said Farmer John. " What would you do if you was me ? "

Old Tim put his clay pipe in his mouth again and said, " If I was you I'd ask Big Tim about it, for he was born wise, too, and is but sixty year old. So I be twenty year furder off wisdom than he be."

Away went Farmer John to find Big Tim, who was Old Tim's son, and he found him sitting on a gate, smoking his briar.

" Morning, Big Tim," said Farmer John.

" Morning, Farmer John," said Big Tim, taking his briar from his mouth.

" I've had the gypsies in my barn again," said Farmer John, " and Old Tim sent me to ask what you would do if you was me, for you was born wise."

Big Tim put his briar in his mouth again and said, " I'd see Little Tim about it if I was you, for he was born wise, too, and is but forty year old, which is twenty year nigher to wisdom than I am."

So off went Farmer John to find Little Tim, who was Big Tim's son, and he found him lying in a haystack chewing a straw.

" Morning, Little Tim," said Farmer John.

" Morning, Farmer John," said Little Tim, taking the straw from his mouth.

Then Farmer John put his case again, saying, " Big Tim told me to come to you about it, for you was born wise."

And Little Tim put the straw back into his mouth and said, " Young Tim was born wise, too, and he's but twenty year old. You'll get wisdom fresher from him than from me."

Off went Farmer John to find Young Tim, who was Little Tim's son, and he found him staring into the mill-pond munching an apple.

" Morning, Young Tim," said Farmer John.

" Morning, Farmer John," said Young Tim, taking the apple from his mouth.

Then Farmer John told his tale for the fourth time, and ended by saying, " Little Tim thinks you'll know what I'd best do, for you was born wise."

But Young Tim took a new bite of his apple and said, " My son who was born last month was born wise too, and from him you'll get wisdom at the fountain-head, so to say."

Off went Farmer John to find Baby Tim, who was Young Tim's son, and he found him in his cradle with his thumb in his mouth.

" Morning, Baby Tim," said Farmer John.

Baby Tim took his thumb out of his mouth, and said nothing.

" I've had the gypsies in my barn again, Baby Tim," said Farmer John, " and Young Tim advised me to ask your advice upon it, for you was born wise. What would you do if you was me ? I'll do whatsoever you say."

Baby Tim put his thumb in his mouth again, and said nothing.

So Farmer John went home, and did it.

In the morning the gypsies went away, and things at the farm went on as before.

And the gypsies tramped to the next village and slept in the barn of Farmer George, and Farmer George called in the constable and had the law of them ; and a week later his barn and his ricks were burned down, and his speckled hen was stolen away.

But the happy village went on being happy and doing nothing, neither when the miller's wife forgot herself one day and boxed the miller's ears, nor when Molly Garden got a bad sixpence from the pedlar, nor when the parson once came home singing by moonlight. After consulting the Tims, the village did no more than trees do in a wood or crops in a field, and so all these accidents got better before they got worse.

Until the day came when Baby Tim died in his wisdom, an unmarried man at one hundred years of age. After that the happy village became as other villages, and did something.

(*Harold Monro*)

Midnight Lamentation

WHEN you and I go down
Breathless and cold,
Our faces both worn back
To earthly mould,
How lonely we shall be ;
What shall we do,
You without me,
I without you ?

I cannot bear the thought
You, first, may die,
Nor of how you will weep
Should I.
We are too much alone ;
What can we do
To make our bodies one :
You, me ; I, you ?

We are most nearly born
Of one same kind ;
We have the same delight,
The same true mind.
Must we then part, we part ;
Is there no way
To keep a beating heart,
And light of day ?

I could now rise and run
Through street on street
To where you are breathing—you,
That we might meet,
And that your living voice
Might sound above
Fear, and we two rejoice
Within our love.

How frail the body is,
And we are made
As only in decay
To lean and fade.
I think too much of death ;
There is a gloom
When I can't hear your breath
Calm in some room.

O, but how suddenly
Either may droop ;
Countenance be so white,
Body stoop.
Then there may be a place
Where fading flowers
Drop on a lifeless face
Through weeping hours.

Is then nothing safe ?
Can we not find
Some everlasting life
In our one mind ?
I feel it like disgrace
Only to understand
Your spirit through your word,
Or by your hand.

I cannot find a way
Through love and through ;
I cannot reach beyond
Body, to you.
When you or I must go
Down evermore,
There'll be no more to say
—But a locked door.

(*Osbert Sitwell*)

Catania

THE life of Catania throbs and shrills noisily outside the hotel, for as befits the second largest, and far the richest, city in Sicily, in clamour it is second to none. The only quiet, placid thing in the hotel is the dead rat still lying by my door. Trams clank, hoot and whistle in the narrow street outside, shutters are barred and unbarred with the rolling of thunder, barrel-organs are already grinding out their accustomed tunes in each piazza in the town, every boy in every street is whistling " Gigoletta," and an immense lion-like roaring comes out of all the bars and cafés—full even at this early hour. Windows are flung wide open with a loud creaking and banging, and strident voices converse across streets, complicated and intersected by tram-lines, live-wires, telephone and telegraph wires that dodge in and out, here and there, dividing the strip of blue, intense blue sky above into the most complicated and three-dimensional series of patterns that shift every moment as the onlooker moves, like the patterns of a kaleidoscope. But these many voices are strong enough to bridge the general uproar that, redoubled by the formation of the town, is sent crashing back here by the sudden rise from the lower to the upper city, while the bright flashing sunlight beating down on us seems actually to increase the volume of sound. Then, too, at this moment the feast of St. Agatha, greatest of all Sicilian festas, is in preparation. Booths and band-stands are everywhere being hurriedly erected, to the widespread accompaniment of hammering and swearing, while the streets are full of peasants, feeling rather ill-at-ease, watching and listening with calm, bullock-like eyes, and clad in the full finery of coloured garments, gold earrings and jewellery, for which the Sicilian peasants are famous.

In spite of its architectural achievement, Catania remains more remarkable for its life and general atmosphere. Walking down from San Nicolo, in a narrow street of tall houses, lofty churches, and doorways that revealed vistas of garden wall and

grey cloister, we were surprised, on looking up at the sky, to see suddenly, far off, a ship in full sail above the houses. There could be no doubt about it, the vessel was a feature of the sky rather than of the sea. This peculiar perspective of its own, due to the sharp rise and fall of the ground, gives the city at once an air that is strange and unearthly. It is the sort of thing that would not be tolerated in England. Were I, for instance, to begin a poem with the lines

" I see a ship above the houses ;
Over my head it sails away,"

those critics, the working of whose minds it is my hobby to unravel, would, if I am not mistaken, dismiss them as the raving of a lunatic. Yet here it is a statement of sober fact.

Slightly startled by this apparition in the blue dome above us, we turned the corner only to be confronted by a large, dark, curly-haired man, with a wooden stump instead of a leg, who was playing on a set of pipes like those played by Papageno in the " Magic Flute." This very sweet music sounded in the empty street like a shower of silver coins falling on the lava paving, but alas ! none rewarded the musician. Used as we were to the harsh quality of Sicilian music, to the barrel organs, here crowned with bells and tambourines, to the braying trumpets of the fortune tellers, to the purring drone and strident clamour of the Zampognari, when they come down from the hills with their huge bag-pipes and long wooden trumpets to celebrate the Nativity, we were unprepared for this gentle, dulcet sound.

The streets in the busier part of the town were crowded with carts, either painted in vivid colours, or unpainted but richly carved. Some of these were full of blocks of sulphur, which, as they were rattled and bumped along, left behind them a subtle suggestion of fire-and-brimstone, and a narrow trail of primrose-coloured powder on the dark lava pavement. Other carts were loaded with oranges, or piled up with lemons, whose diverse scale of golden tones finished the harmony of colouring so well, made them so complete, that they became almost too satisfying a sight, too much like some perfect model or painted

toy, while, as they went by, their sharp aromatic scent conquered for the moment the more normal smells of Sicilian streets. Then another cart would appear, lumbering past us noisily, and laden with earthenware pitchers, of a beautiful Greek shape, of the same design as those used here many centuries before the time of Christ.

In the poorer parts of the town, the walls of the low, box-like houses were plastered over with the placards of the marionette-theatres—placards in the shrillest hues, and drawn in a manner half Byzantine, half 1840, like the Hoxton prints. There was something about them, too, that proclaimed them as specially designed, like the brightly painted signs over Russian shops, for an almost wholly illiterate population. In spite of this, here too were to be found posters giving poetic accounts of the fireworks, musical and otherwise, which would celebrate this year's festa of St. Agatha. These documents, full of the most Gongoresque and flowery descriptive passages, were issued by the Mayor and Corporation. Also, near these, and dwarfing the smaller ones of the marionette-theatres, were posted up vast sheets, heralding the advent of a German circus, and depicting a young lady with golden hair, black waistcoat, pink tights and a dog-whip pirouetting on one foot in the midst of a number of particularly black-striped and snarling tigers. The reading matter below gave one quite a new idea of the terrors of the drawing-room and social life, for the young lady and her feline friends were announced as

" Miss Charles and her eighteen Ferocious Debutantes "

—an announcement which made one long, like Nero, to witness an evenly-matched battle between these eighteen innocents and a team of dowagers chosen with equal care. How much more exciting this would be than the fiercest quarrel with Vicar or Servants, or the opening of even the most thrilling of bazaars.

In among the tortuous lanes wandered ragged children buying prickly-pears that looked like little conventional flames, or purchasing a glass of lemonade at shrilly-painted stalls that gleamed with polished brass, or hurrying to find the fortune-

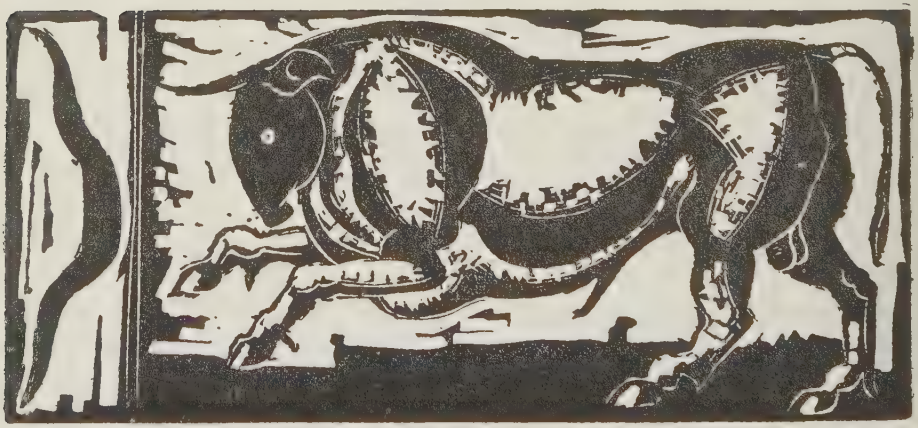
teller whose trumpet could be heard in the distance. A young man, dark as a gypsy, he holds in one hand his trumpet, in the other a large glass bottle or square box full of clear water, balanced on the end of a wooden pole. You give him money and he presses a button. A small black devil, with horns and tail, made of celluloid or a similar substance, can then be seen diving through the water, and you are presented with a printed form which foretells the happenings of your life. While we were having our fortunes told, the door of one of the houses that, covered with placards, looked like gaudily-coloured boxes, opened and out of it stepped, clad in brown hooded robe and wearing sandals, a mendicant friar. This one was a hunchback, and looked as though he were a figure walking out of the decoration of an illuminated missal. He was a very queer survival of the Middle Ages, and surprised us hardly less than if we had seen a knight in armour on his way to a tourney.

(R. A. K. Mason)

In Perpetuum Vale

OH ! I have grown so shrivelled and sere,
But the body of John enlarges,
And I can scarcely summon a tear,
But the body of John discharges.

It's true my old roof is near ready to drop,
But John's boards have burst asunder,
And I am perishing cold here a-top,
But his bones lie stark hereunder.



Signs of the Zodiac

René Ben Sussan.

(*Anna Wickham*)

The Veritable Love

MY son is as lithe as a blossoming tree,
Twice lovely for promise of summer to be ;
And all that's for honour and pride in our race
Is bred in his body and shines in his face.

Blest be the moment his father desired me !
Blest be the hour that the women attired me
For the feast of the bridal, in silver and white,
And blest be the fires of the happy bride-night !

Every love of my life had its measure of joy,
But the happiest love is the love of this boy ;
For the glory of woman's in beauty of men.
And here a man's springtime has blossomed again.

(*Anna Wickham*)

Song to Amidon

DEAR Fragrance !
Be no more a man,
But a small hill of herbs.
And I will take you in my hands,
And press you to more intimate fine scent ;
Then I will hold you to my heart
Till I know grace.
The hungry winds shall woo me for your sake ;
Incontinent I'll fling you to high air.
And you, ascending to poor God's assault,
Shall burden Heaven with your subtle sweet,
Till he repent him of old odorous smoke
And fling out bolts to throw the altars down.

(*Eleanor Farjeon*)

Wild Thyme

TIME runs wild on the hilltops,
Time walks tame in the valleys,
Time runs wild with Gypsy Nan,
But oh! goes tame with Alice.

Night and day on the hilltops
Are one to the Gypsy child;
She eats her breakfast by the moon
Up there where time runs wild.

Alice, meek in the valleys,
Lives by her mother's plan.—
" Oh, Alice, run on the hills with me,
Run wild with Gypsy Nan.

" You shall lie and sleep in the sunlight
While your playmates sit in school,
And when they lie beneath the sheets
You shall dance with stars in a pool.

" You shall dream most when you're waking,
You shall learn most when you play,
You never will think of to-morrow
Or remember yesterday.

" You shall eat when you will and go where you will,
For all folk follow their wills
Who leave their ticking clocks to live
With the wild time on the hills.

" For time runs wild on the hilltops,
And time walks tame in the valleys."—
" I thank you kindly, Gypsy Nan,
I'll stay where I am," said Alice.

(*Translated by Richard Aldington*)

Voltaire's Advice to a Reviewer

(*Voltaire was a great journalist, for the innumerable pamphlets now included in his works under the title "Mélanges" were the journalism of the age; he was also a good reviewer, and contributed at least forty reviews to different journals. His pamphlet, "Conseils à un Journaliste," was written in order to describe the ideal literary review under pretence of giving advice to a friend who was about to undertake such a venture.*)

THE periodical you intend to produce, sir, might very likely succeed, although we have far too many of the sort. You ask me how it shall be conducted so as to please our own age and posterity. I reply in two words: "Be impartial." You have knowledge and taste; if you are also just, I predict a durable success..

Let your work be a faithful register of the glory of great men.

When expounding opinions, when supporting or attacking them, avoid especially those insulting phrases which irritate an author and sometimes a whole nation, without enlightening anybody. No animosity, no irony. What would you say of a judge who, in summing up, insulted the person he condemned? The occupation of a reviewer is not so respectable, but his duty is nearly the same.. And do not imitate those small minds who insult the illustrious dead whom they would not have dared to attack in their lifetime.

You will, of course, take care not to follow the example of certain periodical writers who attempt to decry their contemporaries and to discourage the arts, which a good reviewer ought to support.. We produce excellent works of all kinds. I think no other nation can boast of so large a number of such pleasant works of *belles-lettres*. It is true that we have a crowd of authors in this easy *genre;* there must have been four or five thousand in the last century. But a reader acts towards books as a citizen with men—he does not live with all his contemporaries but chooses his friends from among them.

* * * * *

A good reviewer must at least know English and Italian ; for there are many works of genius in those languages, and genius is hardly ever translated. These two languages, I think, are the most necessary to a Frenchman. The Italians were the first to bring the arts out of barbarity ; and there is such grandeur, such strength of imagination even in the faults of the English, that the study of their language cannot be too much recommended.

It is regrettable that Greek should be neglected in France ; but a reviewer cannot be permitted to be ignorant of Greek.

* * * * *

As to the style of a reviewer, Bayle is perhaps the best model, if you must have one. Yet his style, though always clear and natural, is too negligent, too forgetful of good manners, too incorrect. He is diffuse ; he does indeed converse with his reader like Montaigne, and for that reason charms everyone, but he gives way to a softness of style and to trivial expressions, and thereby often offends a man of taste.

When you are writing of *belles-lettres*, follow the example of the authors and unbend towards your readers, scatter flowers with your writers, and do not fall into the severity of some critics who want everything written in the taste of Cicero and Quintilian. They want a tale to be written in the style of Bourdaloue. Will they never take into account the time, the place, the person ? A noble, masculine eloquence, hostile to small ornaments, suits all great works. An over-ingenious thought would be a fault in Bossuet. But in a work of entertainment, in a compliment, a pleasantry, always let there be light graces, naturalness, *finesse*. Do we talk of business affairs in the same tone as we converse at dinner ? Books are the portraits of human life ; some must be solid, but those which are only charming must be permitted.

Point out the beauties without exaggeration and the faults without tartness. Everything should not be ornament, but nothing should be repulsive. An obscure and grotesque language is not simplicity ; it is elaborate vulgarity.

Avenge good writers upon the obscure scribblers who attack them ; expose the artifices of envy.

(T. S. Eliot)

Doris's Dream Songs

I.

EYES that last I saw in tears
Through division
Here in death's dream kingdom
The golden vision reappears
I see the eyes but not the tears
This is my affliction

This is my affliction
Eyes I shall not see again
Eyes of decision
Eyes I shall not see unless
At the door of death's other kingdom
Where, as in this,
The eyes outlast a little while
A little while outlast the tears
And hold us in derision.

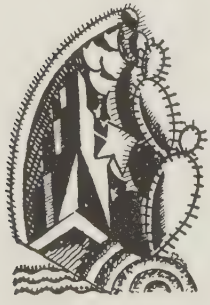
II.

The wind sprang up at four o'clock
The wind sprang up and broke the bells
Swinging between life and death
Here, in death's dream kingdom
The waking echo of confusing strife
Is it a dream or something else
When the surface of the blackened river
Is a face that sweats with tears?
I saw across the blackened river
The camp fire shake with alien spears
Here, across death's other river
The Tartar horsemen shake their spears.

III.

This is the dead land
This is cactus land
Here the stone images
Are raised, here they receive
The supplication of a dead man's hand
Under the twinkle of a fading star.

Is it like this
In death's other kingdom
Waking alone
At the hour when we are
Trembling with tenderness
Lips that would kiss
Form prayers to broken stone.



(*Edward Johnston*)

Tranqvil

APPLE pudding was—and is—my favourite pudding. Nevertheless, Mrs. Coquabona (my fifth cousin, through the Frys) was—and is—my favourite housekeeper. She had (and has) only one fault, namely, that *she puts cloves in her apple puddings*. I had tried Firmness and Sarcasm, both in vain; forbidding cloves; referring to "Clove Pudding." I had fallen back on Reasoning—"The delicate freshness and flavour of the Apple is lost by admixture: to flavour apples with cloves is merely to Paint the Lily Black." Finally, I fell back on Firmness again—there is a great strain of firmness in my nature.

One day I had dined excellently on a "well-flared" chop and boiled potatoes of perfection—if Mrs. C. went to Paradise she would easily eclipse the *Houris*. Her potatoes have not only appearance, but texture and flavour. What Bashaw or Pasha could resist her mealy, creamy Boiled, her crisp, delicate, brown Chips, her soft, esculent, golden Fried, or her perfect Winter Companions *in their Harris tweed Jackets?* "Psha!" they would say to the *Houris*, "take away your cold, white Toads, your watery Mashed, your strips of charred Leather; I shall fly to Mrs. Coquabona." Feeling at peace with all men, I smiled on the entrance of my favourite pudding, happily forgetful, inserted a silver knife in its celestially light covering, and suddenly rose in wrath as the outpouring steam assaulted my nose.

"Woman!" I cried, "this is not a pudding—this abominable confection; you have cooked your vanity bag inside it by mistake. I dare not pry further; take it away and recover your powder-puff before it is too late. Phaugh! Psha! And by all the Tuts! I will not stand it. It is useless to say, 'How often have I told you?'—the times are not only beyond counting, they are completely out of joint. I am nearly disillusioned and must flee; I shall leave the house and not come back until I have found fifteen fools greater than yourself."

I set out early the next morning. It was a fine October day (the First, to be exact), and my spirits rose at its freshness and the sight of everything new made by the sparkling sunshine, at

the birds carolling and the leaves rustling in the crisp, playful air. Again my wrath was turned away, and, as I went, I told over Mrs. Coquabona's points—

How she identified my interests with hers—how cheerful she was—how sincere she was—how well she bore with my occasional outbreaks of Firmness—her *cookery !*

Alas ! There was the rub : the flaw in the perfect. Feet on the verge of faltering became steady—almost stamped ; with an indignant swing I mounted the hill.

A dozen miles, a dozen little hills that laughed and skipped for joy in the sun—and one huge one that lay athwart my path like a huge joke, till, breathless, after an hour's scramble, I reached the point of it—put me in good fettle for breakfast. A new road and a new country lay before me, and I descended into the valley. Here, at the mouth of a village, stood the " Blue Bun," and in another moment myself in its doorway, shouting for breakfast and asking the name of the place.

" Mu'llcombe, sir ; and what will you take ? "

After a hopeless game of guess and trial, I found the house was but a stale beerhouse, holding one fossil sandwich in a glass cage. It was kept, I supposed, as a sort of symbol—to me, the hungry, truly a portent.

" Ah, th'am sa'wich is sixpunce ! " said the host, intercepting my regard.

" Indeed," said I, " and what was it when it was fresh ? "

" *Same* price," he replied ; " *allus* the same price."

" *That's the First*," I muttered, taking a hurried leave.

In the High Street my eye was caught by a placard in a window—" EPPEL GELY, 1d. MUTTON PIES, &c." A nice, little, old dame stood behind the counter. I bought three pies and she made me a cup of coffee. The pies were good ; the coffee weak but " hot and wet," and we chatted. I paid a modest bill, and the old dame confided that she made a loss on each one of the pies, as she put a good pennyworth of meat into each. This was shocking. " How did she manage to live ? "

" Ah," she said, " it's the *quantity* I sell—the *great* quantity," she added proudly.

I retired in some confusion—she was a nice old woman, but the Second.

Muddlecombe presents a charming and picturesque exterior to the passing visitor—a quaintness marred for the gastronome. I perambulated its streets ; by two o'clock I had forgotten my true quest in the pressing problem of lunch. House after house blinked at me under its thatch from its owlish dormers ; some, standing elbowing each other, seemed to set their timbers akimbo ; all stared. I stared back, recalling the Witch's House in *Hansel and Gretel.* That was too sweet a house for middle-age, but, remodelled, how attractive ! Suppose it were built of long, crisp French rolls, half-timbered with German sausages (*Leberwurst* and *Salami*) and tiled with slices of ham (" *Healed* " is, I believe, the *mot juste* of the insurance companies) ; the chimneys steaming pots of *café au lait* ; as for details, say, window frames of Stilton with butter-pat ornaments, and there might be a Benedictine well in the front garden, with bucket and windlass.

Matter again triumphed over mind when I came on " The Drummers' Arms," standing back from the main street. Not without misgivings I was ushered into the " Commercial " room by the melancholy waiter. The air of that room exceeded the ordinary closeness and staleness ; it had an excessiveness of its own which may have come from the damp oilcloth, the heavy curtains or the cases of what had once been stuffed birds and fish. The melancholy one, who said that the windows had been painted for the Diamond Jubilee and could not be opened since, proposed " A nice cut off the joint." I shall not describe that meal nor my valiant but unwise dallying with it. Discomforted then, I had become an acute invalid when, towards dusk, I enquired at a pleasant farmhouse just outside Muddlecombe how far it was to the next village. Five miles in the dark was now too much for me, and the farmer offered to put me up for the night.

I took no supper but a little strong coffee, and then sat with the farmer and his family round the fire. His wife said to the old father, " Tell the gentleman how you nearly got lost, Gramfa'." So the old man, much pleased, began :

" When I were new married I lived in Assing, an' one day I was going to market in Sloely with several neighbours. They was rough times, an' we kept together. An' my old woman, an' some of theirs, said ' Mind you don't lose yourselves on the way home.' Se we went to the Town, a dozen of us, an' did our cheeping ; an' we had a chirp at ' The Farmer's Rest ' before we left. We had just got back to the bridge by Assing when one said, ' Are we all here, old lads ? ' So we began to count, an' none of us could make more than 'leven. An' we all said, ' One of us is lost, surelie.' An' we daren't go home, but just then a man came along an' asked what was the matter, an' we told him how one was lost. He looks pretty middling hard at us, an' says, ' What'll you give me if I find un ? ' An' we says, ' A bob each,' because we was afraid of the women. So he took his stick an' gave each of us a cut with it, an' as each one jumped the man counted, an' he made us twelve all right, an' we each gave him a bob. An' when I had done rubbing my leg I asked him how he found the one we lost, an' he says, ' You each forgot to count yourselves.' An' we never quite made out his meaning, but the women said nothing more than usual when we got home, so we reckoned he was right."

" Here is the Third," I said to myself, amid the general laughter.

I spent a good deal of that night thinking hazily of Hamlet's Soliloquy, and wondering whether I had really " shuffled off my mortal coil," or whether it was still going on inside me. The next morning, however, I was much better, and by the early afternoon was quite recovered. After lunch " Gramfa' " and I sat in the porch, smoking and talking. About three o'clock, thinking I had better be moving, I asked him about the next village, Assing ; which seemed to be a likely sort of place. And Gramfa' said, " Where might you be thinking of going ? " I told him that I had left home in a hurry and had made no special plan, but thought that perhaps I might find my way to Gooseport.

" An' you come from Drangvil—a fine, quiet place, I've heard tell—an' you set off in a hurry for nowhere perticler ? Now that minds me of young Bill Harkaway. *He* left home in a hurry, an' got bitten in the very next town by a mad dog. But

they never could tell if it would ha' turned to hydrewphoby because he was drowned at sea the week afterwards. His folks lived most comfortable, and his mother was notable at cooking an' all round as you might say. Young Bill he was that comfortable : but he forgot he was so well off, an' dashed out of the house one fine day, an' away to sea, saying things h'd ha' been sorry for afterwards if he had not been drowned, for he was that fond of his mother. An' she doted on him, but had her own idees about cookery, an' would ha' worked both her arms, and her legs too, to the bone for him if that had not been necessary owing to them being so well off.

" An' well may you ask the reason. He was likewise that fond of apple pudden, an' he liked it nice an' spicey with lots of these here clovises an' things in it—which his mother couldn't abide. An' Bill swore he would run away to sea if she gave it him plain again ; an' she stood firm that she would not spoil a pudden with clovises for King George himself. The night before Bill had lost a tooth through having a argyment with a friend at ' The Oilcan an' Spanner,' an' he was feeling a bit sore when the pudden came on as usual. So he ups an' says, ' I'm off,' an' behaved no sense, as I told you."

" He was a fool," I cried, " and didn't know when he was well off."

" Talking o' fools——" began Gramfa'.

* * * * *

" No need," cried I, springing up—suddenly, dazzlingly enlightened. " I've found them *all* ; the Tally is complete. Good day, and thank you for your company. I must go home at once."

I ran through Muddlecombe, nodding to the old dame of the pies, even smiling at the " Blue Bun," and swiftly climbed the hill. The afternoon was waning. Three hours' sharp walking lay between me and happiness. But, should I be too late ? Should I find my old home again ? Should I find Mrs. C.—would she not have left in just indignation ? Dear Mrs. C. Perhaps she would stand by.

How kind and thoughtful she was—how hearty and honest—how forgiving—what a perfect cook !

Running and walking, I came in the dark to a lighted window, and next moment stood by my own hearth. Mrs. C. greeted me with a smile, and to my halting apology for having been cross she said she'd forgotten all about it, and felt sure I'd be home again by this supper-time. She deftly set the table, while recounting the two days' portion of Tranqvil's simple annals.

" The Tax Collector came, and I told him you had had to leave home in a hurry, and I didn't know when you would be able to return ; and I said that, also, to some people who said they knew you and had come to collect for the ' Higher Thought Society.' And I got hold of the plumber, and made him mend that draughty window and the tap that dripped.

" And now I've made a nice fire in your little workroom, as the nights are beginning to be sharp, and put some new books, which came for you by the afternoon post, on the table by your chair, and trimmed the reading-lamp ; so you can have a comfortable rest after supper. And the Squire sent a pheasant—which I'm afraid wasn't shot yesterday but is just right ; and I thought some chips and a little celery sauce would go with it ; and it will be ready in a quarter of an hour—and a bottle of that Sherry you used to talk about so much ; because he thought it was your birthday."

" Why, so it is ! And the happiest one in my life ! " I exclaimed.

" And I have made your favourite pudding, only we'd run out of cloves, so I put some sticks of cinnamon in it instead."

" My dear Mrs. Coquabona, put cinnamon, mace, nutmeg, allspice—what you will—

" ' Heap cassia, sandal-buds and stripes
Of labdanum, and aloe balls——'

but let me give you a kiss for the dear, good soul you are. I found *all* the fools—and one who was good for a dozen—but I've never met anyone half so kind and good and clever as yourself."

(NOTE.—*The Sandwich and Mutton Pie incidents are from life ; the tale of the Twelve Men is adapted from an ancient folk-tale.*—E. J.)

(*Camilla Doyle*)

The Poisoning Countess

(A.D. 1610)

I NEVER walk the fields but there
I see the toadstools tall and spare,
And short and squab, and there they call :
" Come pick us, we are poisons all ! "

There I stand and wonder whether
Toadstools, every kind together,
Cooked by me as mushrooms, might
Make strong Lord Essex die outright.

O, sodden toadstools look to me
Cleaner than I that have to be
His wife and know life's ugliest fate,
Bodily bound to the man I hate.

If there were even a bull in all
These empty fields, then I might call
My enemy here and then by cunning
Slip out and watch the bull come running.

By every hedgerow where I pass
My feet drag in the dead wet grass,
Wondering if, when I look with care,
I shall find nightshade-berries there.

They would not show in red fruit pies—
But more is wanted before he dies.
When I see the house from far away
I stop in the rain and softly say :

" Which is the window that would be
The worst to fall from suddenly ?"
And there's no village lout that limes
The wild birds in their singing-times

And not a hag with quilted face
That I see round this doleful place
But I wonder : " Would you bring me down
Powders in secret from the town ? "

No, for they show but common vice,
And I want a friend with demon's eyes.
And poisons are hard, so hard to buy.
And still I wander and hate and cry.

(*Alec Brown*)

The Lepers of Jerusalem

UPON the Kedron bridge, three, four, five,
Shrunk in the dust, with corrugated skin,
A delegation, plead, to keep alive,
For alms at distance tossed into a tin.

A delegation leprous of the men
Who miserably crouch, slink, by the wall,
Or shrink into their isolated pen
Waiting till it fall, till darkness fall.

For many herded, while the choking sun
The lizards on the acrid earth excites,
Float in a sea of rags down one by one
In thought's dull mercy thither, where the rites

Of leprous dead enliven the living dying
By a select procession from the city
To where the cast-out tinned-food tins are lying ;
While others thus, we see, receive our pity.

A delegation on an ancient bridge
With some of those same tins to catch the cash,
While eyes turned upward to the temple ridge
With tact avoid the donor's cautious dash ;

Yet what, burned by the sun, they represent,
When thus, no doubt, with clink, the Romans threw
Their small sestertius, or our modern cent,
Keeping the side from which the foul wind blew,

Ignorant wind conveys not this disease ;
Yet that lumped skin, those sores, the withering limbs,
The whining prayer, the agonising pleas
Beside the rock replete with Judah's hymns

Since David smote the servile Jebusite,
And Solomon with cedar and fine gold,
Six hundred talents, laid o'er breadth and height,
On beams and posts and walls and doors outrolled,

Fall like a bony hand that clutched chill
And in a nightmare opes the chasm wide,
Where hollow ages past and that damp, still,
Near and narrow grave our acts deride.

There, on the bridge, as on a desolate plain,
Like a bright oasis of rags they stand
And gasp a moment in their music's strain
As a small coin clinks from a fearsome hand.

This whining chant great Alexander heard,
And Ptolemy and Titus, bright with lust,
Amid the ruins shiveringly stirred
As that feared song came shuffling through the dust.

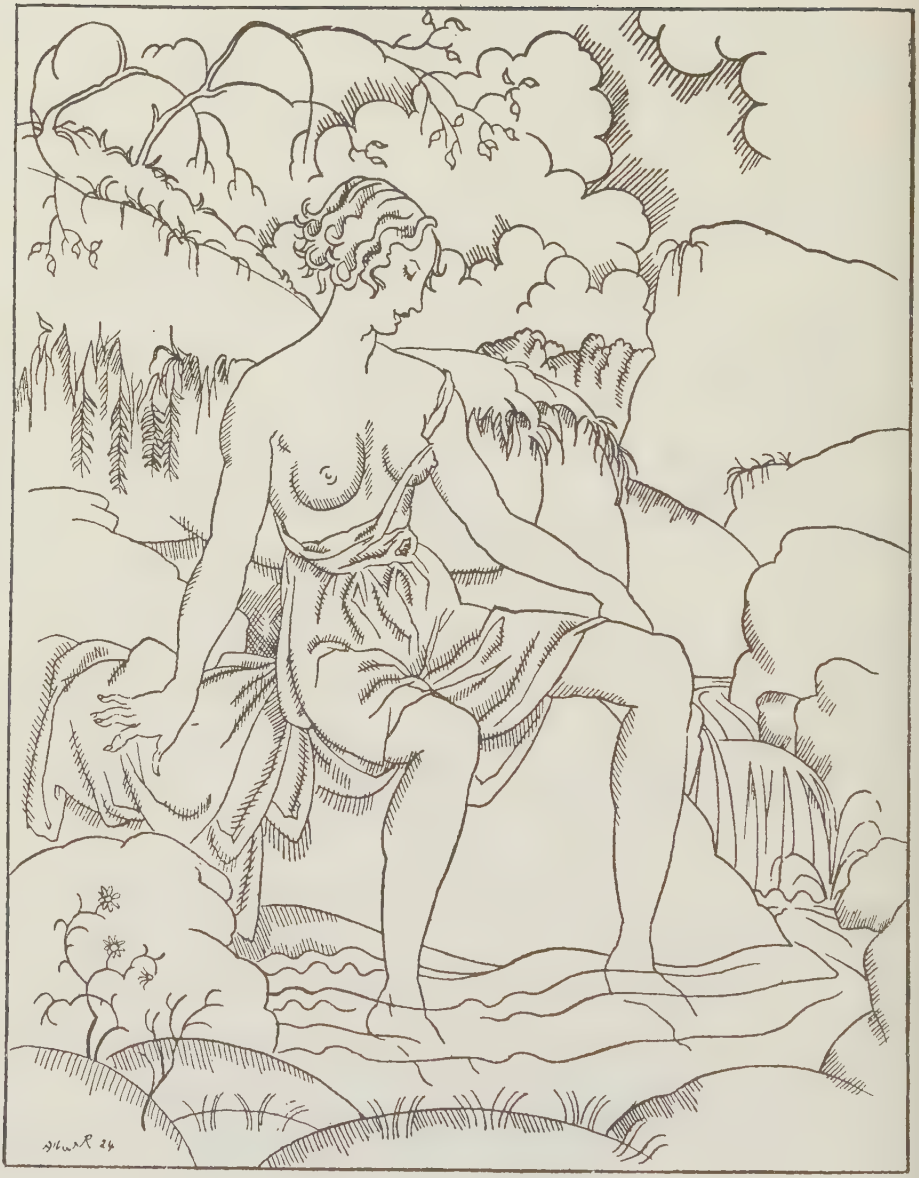
(*Alec Brown*)

The Murderer at Trial

THE unaccustomed jar of sound mutters
Round his close-cropped head ;
Through the chinks of life's shutters
He sees friends' tears unshed.

At night upon the straw he laughed unseen,
At dawn dreams inanimate ;
And at the trial it seems his cold, keen
Unholy eyes hold but hope's fate.

They do not know the door has long been closed,
And as from distant places sounds are sweet ;
The staring and condemning met composed ;
The sound of children playing in the street.



(*Anna Wickham*) The Venturous Shepherdess

LISTEN, good Ewes, to this wonderful thing !
There's a troll in your woods, with the eyes of a king.
I have marked out the path to his cave with a stone,
And I'll drive him with boughs to the height of a throne :
For he shall inherit your grazing land ;
His head is an orb, and a sceptre his hand.

I'll run to the hills, and run to the glen,
And call to the maidens, and call to the men :
"Wake, sleepy folk, to this wonderful thing—
In a cave of your woods, I have found you a King,
In a cave of your woods, I have found you a lord,
His word is a crown, his glance is a sword ! "

Bring spears, ye striplings ; hunt for his pleasure !
Bring flowers, ye girls, and dance for his leisure !
With rare sweet food shall the King be fed,
And ten white maids shall smooth him his bed,
And I will sit and laugh all my life,
For a keeper of sheep is the King-troll's wife.

(*Frances Cornford*) In Vain

HOW definitely my soul sees
That dog with clear, devouring eyes.
If I could pat him where he lies,
If I could touch my memories !

If I could touch my memories—
I see the figures of the dead
So quietly-living in my head,—
If I could reach the hands of these !

(*John Gould Fletcher*)

The Unknown God

STONY and vast and agelessly old and still
He waits who craves no part in human will.

Unspeaking and unwearied, stirring not ;
The single living force time has forgot.

About him rage ten million suns ; their eyes
Blaze out, then ebb. No gesture of surprise

Escapes him. Profitless and old and stale
To him is now creation's endless tale.

All is but shapeless dust his feet have trod
In vain upstirring it. Not any god

As equal to himself he found. Again
He has sought here and there and all is vain.

Vain, idle, useless. Neither in heaven nor hell
Nor in mankind's dumb longing can he dwell,

Only within the void. Withdrawn behind
The veil of time can he wait now, resigned.

Sometimes the fall of a lost star through night
He sees, but does not shudder at the sight.

Sometimes a new star-cluster swift expands
Out of dead dust, dark whirled. He does not move his hands.

Sometimes a world explodes and people shriek
As they are blown to bits. He does not speak.

Only from age to age across that face,
Vast, stony, lifeless, without any trace

Of thought or effort, slowly falls a tear
And slides down cheek and chin till it drops clear

Into the abyss of nothingness and no spot
Of space receives it. 'Tis as if it were not.

And still he does not move. And still he sees,
Out of the darkness crawling, new eternities

Which ebb and flow, while in his heart he dreams
That all of those tears which have fallen down in streams

From his eyes since the birth of time have grown
An endless ocean, serene, still, alone :

Whose brackish waters quench the failing power
Of the far stars, and rising hour by hour

Will conquer worlds of flame and cold and men—
And when the last has fallen, then, O then,

Brooding on that still ocean will he be
Alone at last to all eternity.

hid Group (from a
odcut by Eric Daglish)

(*Camilla Doyle*) On the Site of Wolsey's Palace

THREE things I saw at dusk,
In the cardinal's ground ;
Two stags with profiles calm and carved,
And a white owl circling round.

He flew and the stags watched,
We watched standing still—
The tenants who had kept the lord cardinal company
Thinking with me on the hill—

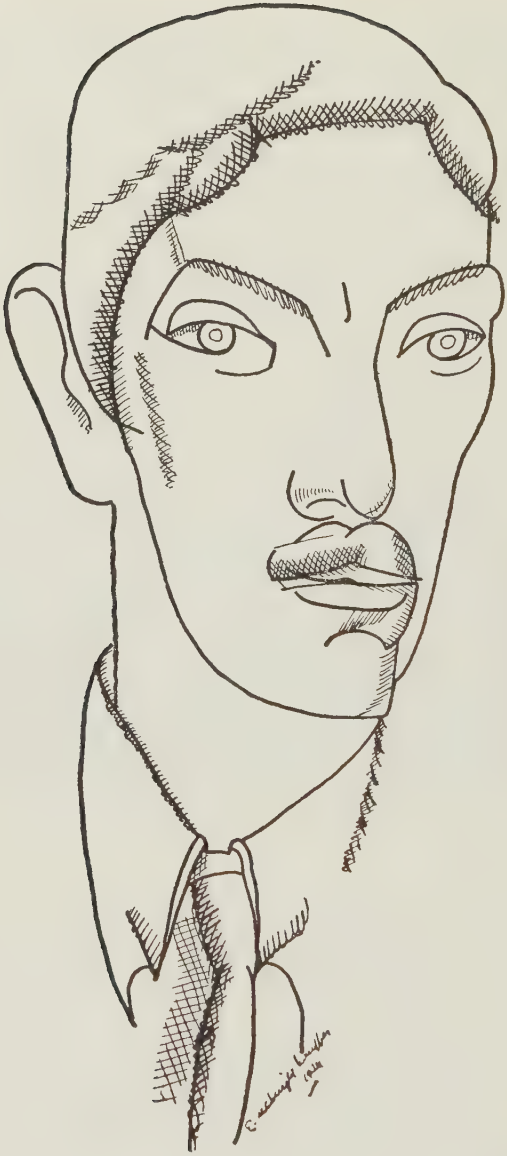
The stags he had chased while the king's favour
Fled faster than stags,
And the owl that had mourned round his window at night
Over the courtyard-flags.

Where but a rusted gate
Stayed in a bit of wall,
They only maintained the state that was kept
Before the cardinal's fall.

Nor will they stay, with the roads
And the trampling that we bring.
We shall lose their grace with the palace that's gone,
As the cardinal lost the king.

The stags stood one behind the other
Still as sculptured things ;
Their chests were white and curved in the dusk
Like the owl's wings.

I saw the owl's soft, blunt head
Over the cardinal's ground ;
He flew white between rows of pitch-dark trees
As the dusk clotted round.



(*Frances Cornford*)

Storm and Spring Dawn

COME, exorcising cuckoo's song,
Cry through this wilderness of rain !
You dragon-thunder, roaring long
Across the fields, roar not again !

You lightning,—torch that Azrael bore
To show men suddenly their sins,—
Stab the uncurtained dark no more !
The cuckoo in the marsh begins.

(*Susan Miles*)

Contact

ALL that I knew of you was a sherbert-smeared palm
And a mouse-brown top-knot tied with a once-pink bow.
And all that you knew of me
Was a random hand
Gripped suddenly that you might cross
St. Giles' Circus in security.
I did not see your eyes, nor you mine ;
My face to you
My body to you,
Were nothing.
I was to you of less significance than the island in the middle of the Circus.
For a brief moment
My hanging hand was to you
A convenience
Which, when you reached the kerb, you dropped swiftly and in silence.
The traces of your palm's contact were wiped from my fingers eight years ago ;
But you—
Indifferent infant, set ever upon your own pursuits
—Stick still within my grudging memory,
Inexplicably persistent.

(*J. Nishiwaki*)

A Kensington Idyll

I.

ATKINSON has a tremendous storm of gloom
When the lilacs come into bloom.
The waves of languor dash against his breast :
In his pyjamas he takes a rest.
His tongue is as bitter as a tansy leaf ;
His eyes are cloudy with grief.
His windpipe is deprived of sonorous words ;
His hair makes a nest for the birds.
He mutters : " The curlew must not sing to-night.
I must not weep ; I must fight."
He sups on a bottle of stout, filberts and bread,
And slips into a snowy bed.

II.

Atkinson begins to enjoy his disease.
He feels his soul carol in the trees.
He has a longing to wipe his burning lips
With a sponge steeped in ocean drips.
As if from a hill-top he shouts : " By Jove,
I am a great citron grove."

III.

Atkinson rides a camel with Columbine
From Dover Street to Palestine.
Their trunk contains *The Tatler*, vinegar,
Pink slippers shaped like a cigar,
An Oxford Odyssey, plover eggs, brandy,
A mackintosh, prunes, and candy.
Nightmares dig out the City of Solomon ;
A snore is an ass to journey on ;
Fever is strings to an epic of mountains,
Seas, vineyards, bowers, and fountains.

rom a Pen Drawing
Paul Nash

(*Harold Monro*)

The Earth for Sale

HOW perilous life will become on earth
When the great breed of man has covered all.
The world, that was too large, will be too small.
Deserts and mountains will have been explored,
Valleys swarmed through ; and our prolific breed,
Exceeding death ten million times by birth,
Will halt (bewildered, bored),
And then will droop and dwindle like an autumn weed.

How shall we meet that moment when we know
There is no room to grow ;
We, conscious, and with lonely startled eyes
Glaring upon ourselves, and with no Lord
To pray to : judged, without appeal,
What shall we feel ?
He, being withdrawn, no supplicating cries
Will call Him back. He'll speak no further word.

Can special vision be required to see
What few pale centuries will take us there,
Where, at the barrier of the future, we
Shall stand condemned, in serried ranks, and stare
At Nothing—fearing Something may appear ?

The Earth is covered with large auction boards,
And all her lands are reckoned up for sale.
The spaces that are now called virgin soil
Will soon be bought, and covered with great breed
Of human seed ;
And, when the driven hordes
Cry: "Food ! "—but find no more for any toil,
Fear, fear will strike all eyes and faces pale.
Then no one more will speak,
But, rising from a murmur to a wail,
One voice, for all, will, like a Siren, shriek.

II

Is there no pledge to make at once with Earth
While yet we have not murdered all her trees ;
Before it is too late for oath or pledge ;
While yet man may be happy in his birth—
Before we have to fall upon our knees,
Clinging for safety to her farthest edge ?

It is not very noble that we kill
Her lions and tigers, all. Is that our reign ?—
Then let us build ourselves on earth again.
What is the human will ?
Is it so clearly better than the ant's ?
And is our life more holy than the plants' ?
They do fulfil their purpose every year,
And bring no pain, nor fear.

III

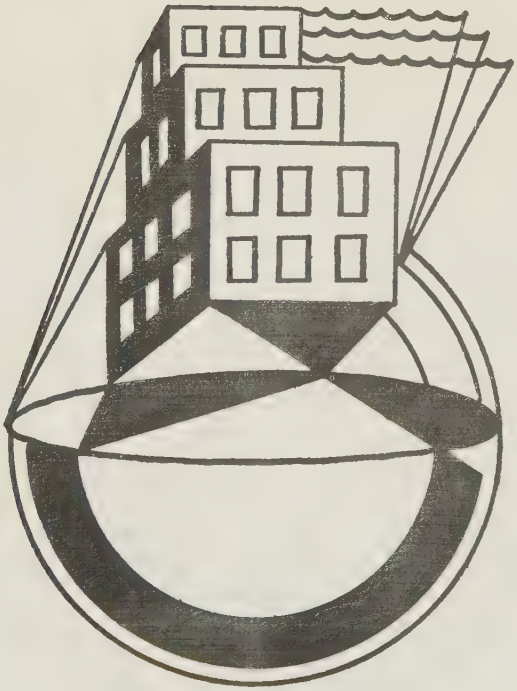
Woe to that miserable last mankind ;
And, when I think of that, I have a dread
I may awake on earth, again, to find
Myself, among it, living, and not dead.

IV

I had been thinking of that final Earth.
Then I remembered she herself would lick
Her own lithe body clean, and from her girth
Wipe any vermin that might cling too thick.

Damned ! Damned ! Apparent conqueror to-day—
Oh, evanescent sway !
O drunken lust !
O swarming dust !

Man makes himself believe he has a claim
To plant bright flags on every hill he swarms ;
But in the end, and in his own proud name,
And for the better prospect of his fame,
Whether it be a person or a race,
Earth, with a smiling face,
Will hold and smother him in her large arms.



(*Eleanor Farjeon*)

The Lovebirds

AT the end of the street stood the school. On the right-hand street corner sat Old Dinah, the gypsy, who kept a pair of lovebirds in a cage. And on the left-hand street corner sat Susan Brown, who sold bootlaces. Susan thought she was about nine years old, but she never quite knew. As for Old Dinah's age, it was too great to be remembered, and she had forgotten it long ago.

At half-past twelve every morning, when school was over, the little girls and boys ran out through the gate on the way home, and Susan Brown would remember it was dinner time; and she would begin to eat her bit of bread and dripping, and admire the little girls' hair-ribbons and the little boys' boots without holes in them. Very often their bootlaces were broken and knotted together, for you know what bootlaces are, but Susan Brown never really expected the little boys to come and give her their penny for a new pair. Their mothers bought their bootlaces for them in a shop, and they wanted the penny for something else, for a top, or an ounce of bullseyes, or a balloon. And the little girls with their pennies got beads, or peardrops, or a bunch of violets. But almost every day at least one or two of the little girls and boys would stop in front of Old Dinah's lovebirds, and hold out their pennies and say, "I want a fortune, please."

For the lovebirds were such wonderful birds!—they were not only wonderful to look at, with their smooth grass-green bodies and long blue tail-feathers, they were wonderful because they could give you a fortune for a penny; and you can't get a fortune much cheaper than that.

Whenever a child came to buy a penny fortune, Old Dinah said, "Put your finger in the cage, ducky!" And when the child did so, one of the two lovebirds hopped on to the finger and was brought out with a flutter of wings. Then Old Dinah held out the fortunes in a little packet of folded papers, pink and green, and purple, and blue, and yellow, that always hung

outside the cage-door. And the wonderful lovebird picked out one of the fortunes with its curved beak, and the child took it. But how did the lovebird know just which was the right fortune for that child?—the right one for Marion, for Cyril, for Helen, for Hugh? All the children put their heads together over the little coloured papers, and wondered.

"What's *your* fortune, Marion?"

"I'm to marry a king. It's a purple one. What's *yours*, Cyril?"

"A green one. I'm to go a long journey. What's Helen's?"

"I got a yellow one," said Helen, "and I'm to have seven children. What's *your* fortune, Hugh?"

"I'm to succeed in all my undertakings. It's blue," said Hugh. Then they ran home to their dinners.

Susan Brown sat listening with all her ears. How beautiful to have a fortune! If only she had a penny to spare! But Susan Brown never had a penny to spare, and not often any other sort of penny, either.

But one day, when the children had gone, and Old Dinah was nodding in the sun, something lovely happened. The door of the lovebirds' cage had been left open a little by accident, and one of them got out. Old Dinah, asleep on her corner, didn't see. But Susan, awake on hers, did see. She saw the little green bird hop from its perch and flutter to the pavement. She saw it run along the kerb a little way, and she saw a thin cat crouch in the gutter. Susan's heart gave such a jump that it made her body jump too. She jumped before the cat did, and ran across the road crying "Shoo!"

The cat turned away as though it was thinking of something else, and Susan put her hand down to the lovebird, and the lovebird hopped on to her finger. Now to have a lovebird sitting on your finger is as lovely a thing as anyone can wish for on a summer day; it was the loveliest thing that had happened to Susan Brown in all her life. But that wasn't all; for just as they got to the cage-door the lovebird stretched out its beak, and picked a rose-pink fortune from the packet, and gave it to

Susan. She couldn't believe it was true, but it was. She put the lovebird in the cage, and went back to her corner with her fortune in her hand.

In time Marion and Cyril and Helen and Hugh stopped going to school. They had lost their fortunes long ago, and forgotten all about them. And Marion married the chemist's young man, and Cyril sat all day in an office, and Helen never happened to marry at all, and Hugh never happened to do anything whatever.

But Susan Brown kept her fortune all her life. By day she kept it in her pocket, and by night she kept it under her cheek. She didn't know what was in it, because she couldn't read. But it was a rose-pink fortune, and she hadn't had to buy it—it had been given to her.

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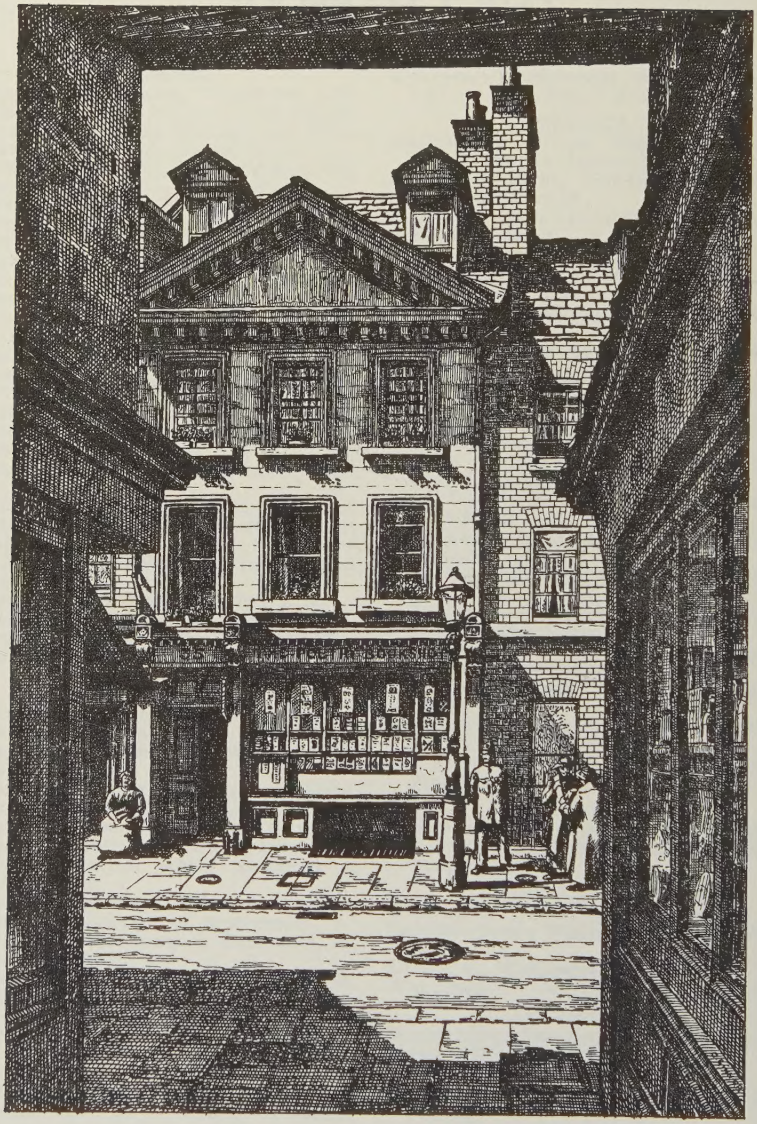

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